Protection of bio-diversity and wildlife in Manas reserve

2099. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are undertaking any programme in Manas Biosphere Reserve of Assam to protect, preserve and enrich its biological diversity and wild life;

(b) if so, what are the programmes and which agencies have been engaged for that;

(c) whether Government have sanctioned funds for the purpose in the current financial year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government is implementing a number of programmes namely Conservation of Biosphere Reserves, Project Tiger and Project Elephant in Manas Biosphere Reserve of Assam to protect, preserve and enrich its biological diversity and wild life. These programmes are being implemented by the State Forest Department.

(c) and (d) An amount of Rs. 361.36 lakhs has been proposed for various activities under these programmes during the current financial year. The funds to State Governments are sanctioned and released on completion of prescribed obligations like submission of Utilisation Certificate and Physical Progress Report of funds released in the preceding year/s. The sanction and release of funds under the above projects is at various stages of processing.

State of forest report

2100. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recently released 'State of Forest Report' reveals that the country has lost some 26,000 sq.kms. dense forest areas during the last year;

(b) the States where substantial deforestation had taken place and if

so, whether the forest lands were used for developmental projects for forest dwellers; and

(c) the States that have retained their area of forest cover or even are adding thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No Sir. As per the State of Forest Report, 2003 (SFR, 2003), a biennial report published by Forest Survey of India, the real decrease in dense forest cover is assessed to be 4,605 sq. km. only, whereas the decrease to the extent of 21,640 sq. km. is due to interpretational corrections mostly in 1 to 25 ha. patches outside the recorded forests such as crops like cotton, sugarcane etc. which give reflectance similar to that of forest cover. But at the same time, the open forest cover has increased by 29,040 sq. km. over the previous assessment of SFR, 2001.

(b) The list of States where there has been a decrease in the forest cover as per the State of Forest Report, 2003, is given in Statement-I. (*See* below) The land under forest cover has been diverted for various developmental projects for the welfare of the people including forest dwellers. So far an area of 1004585.52 hectares of forest land has been diverted since 1980, which is about 1.29% of the existing forest/tree cover of the country for which necessary compensatory afforestation is mandatory.

(c) The list of States showing an increase in the area under forest cover is given in Statement-II.

Statement-I

Name of the States where there has been decrease in forest cover

Name of State/UT	Decrease in Dense Forest (Area in Sq.Kms.)
Andhra Pradesh	218
Arunachal Pradesh	26
Bihar	162
Chhattisgarh	450

Name of State/UT	Decrease in Dense Forest (Area in Sq.Kms.)
Gujarat	206
Haryana	237
Himachal Pradesh	7
Karnataka	542
Madhya Pradesh	836
Maharashtra	617
Orissa	472
Punjab	852
Rajasthan	541
Lakshadweep	4

Statement-II

Name of the States where there has been increase in forest cover

Name of State/UT	Increase in Dense Forest (Area in Sq.Kms.)
Assam	112
Delhi	59
Goa	61
Jammu and Kashmir	30
Jharkhand	79
Kerala	17
Manipur	293
Meghalaya	1255
Mizoram	936
Nagaland	264
Sikkim	69
Tamil Nadu	1161
Tripura	1028
Uttar Pradesh	372
Uttaranchal	527
West Bengal	1650
A & N Islands	34
Chandigarh	6
Dadra & N. Haveli	6
Daman & Diu	2
Pondicherry	4